The Chatterlings

by Michael Lipman

Illustrations by the Author

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The Chatterlings

Merry X-mas-
To Rachel from
Mama —

SUITCASE
CARPET BAG
VALISE
GLADSTONE BAG
KNAPSACK
SATCHEL
TELESCOPE
Michael Lipman

The Chatterlings

Written and Illustrated by

MICHAEL LIPMAN

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Fourth Edition

Generally speaking, this book is dedicated to folk whose feet prefer puddles to pavements; it is especially dedicated to Barbara, Elizabeth, Gretchen, Jimmie, Ruth, Edmund, Robert, Roy, Harry and Lois . . . . whose feet happen to prefer the puddles of our particular street.

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To
Dr. Mabel Robinson
and to
Mr. Montgomery Schuyler
the author is deeply indebted
for most essential help.

THE King of Chatterland always meant what he said; when he asked for a spade, he *wanted* a spade, and if anyone brought him a shovel instead, how he would storm!

Once, when he was very old, he sent for his favorite prince, whose name was Tip o'Tongue, and when the Prince appeared the King said:

"Tip o'Tongue, I have something important to say to you. But first, I would ask you a

question. Do you remember what happened at the dinner I gave to celebrate Noah Webster's birthday?"

"Indeed I do," Prince Tip o'Tongue answered. "You told me to pass a plate . . . and I passed you a saucer."

"Which nearly broke up the party. It displeased me so much that I almost sent you out to join the Red Chatterlings!"

"I have made no such mistake since then," Prince Tip o'Tongue said.

"You have been most careful ever since, and now I am going to reward you."

"How?"

"By making you the King! From now on you are to rule in my place. Go at once to the Royal Hat-maker and get for yourself a crown."

When Tip o'Tongue heard that, he certainly was glad. Outside the palace gates he turned two somersaults and a cartwheel. Then he dashed so fast toward the Royal Hat-maker's shop that he almost bumped into Toby Trubble's sister Angelina.

"Where are you going in such a hurry?" Angelina asked.

"I'm going to the Royal Hat-maker to get me a crown," Tip o'Tongue answered, and told her all about his good

fortune. Of course, Angelina was very glad to hear the good news.

"I'll go along with you," she said, "to make sure that it looks well—and fits."

It didn't take long to reach the shop; but finding a crown that suited them both took a very long time, indeed.

One was too small, another too large. The next was the right size, but was set with green jewels—and Tip o'Tongue had blue eyes . . . so Angelina didn't think it would do. One looked well from the front—but it wasn't quite right from the back.

It was getting later and later. The sun set, twilight came . . . it was night. The Royal Hat-maker sent for all the lights that could be found—and at last something was tried that seemed just right.

It looked well, back, front, and from both sides. The color of the jewels matched Tip o'Tongue's eyes exactly—and it fitted!

So it was wrapped up and Tip o'Tongue carried it back to the King.

The King opened that package, himself. After one glance at the purchase his eyes blazed with anger. He stamped on the floor with his foot, and he pounded on the table with his fist. For the first time in his life he couldn't find words to fully express his feelings—and that made

him more angry than ever! Many minutes passed before he could speak at all, but when he could, he said:

"I told you to get a crown, didn't I?"

"Isn't that a crown?"

"Is a colt a horse? Of course, it isn't a crown! That's only a *coronet!* Go away, I want to think."

Prince Tip o'Tongue left—sad and worried; he was afraid the King was going to make him join the Red Chatterlings.

When a Chatterling got into the habit of using the wrong words, by way of punishment, he had to wear a long pointed *red* hat, and after that he was always known as a Red Chatterling. He had to wear great, heavy, wooden shoes, too, that clattered when he walked.

The Red Chatterlings were always saying things they did not mean. When they wanted hats they would ask for caps. They didn't seem to know the difference between a slipper, a shoe and a boot. In their lingo a sofa was a bed, and a bed was a couch.

Such carelessness always led to misunderstandings—and misunderstandings led to quarreling and fighting. They did little else, in the town where they lived, and they made their living by catching sardines.

The good subjects of the King had as little to do with them as possible. No one would talk to a Red Chatterling except on business. It was *so* easy to get into the habit of using the wrong words. Anyone could, just by listening.

That was why the Red Chat-

terlings tried to talk to Tip o'Tongue whenever they could. They wanted to get him into their own bad habit, for they knew how fond the King was of Prince Tip o'Tongue—and the Red Chatterlings hated the King! Indeed, at the present moment, they were in open rebellion!

Heretofore, Tip o'Tongue had always tried to avoid them; when he couldn't, he stuffed cotton in his ears.

On the way home, he thought of these things and he dreamed about them all night long.

The next morning, after breakfast, the King sent for Tip o'Tongue, and when the Prince appeared, the King said:

"A king, Prince Tip o'Tongue, should seldom speak; but when he does speak, he *must* use the right words—and the rights words only. Last night, I was angry enough to make a Red Chatterling out of you. But I won't do that yet. You shall have one more chance . . . and a chance to win the crown as well."

"How?" asked Tip o'Tongue, anxiously.

"By finding two words that mean exactly the same thing," the King said, "but, until you do that, you shall wear a plain, common, ordinary hat—without one single band around it!"

In Chatterland colored bands were very highly esteemed. They could only be worn by persons of importance, like a

king, or a prince, or a duke. Hat bands were also awarded for brave, or good deeds. By climbing the church steeple with bird-seed for some starving squabs Toby Trubble had won a green band. When his sister Angelina found a way to make the sugar-cane bear lollypops, she had been given two, a blue one and a yellow one.

Because he was a prince, Tip o'Tongue wore three. These the King now removed and he put them in his own pocket.

"How long may I have to find two words that mean exactly the same thing?" Prince Tip o'Tongue asked.

Looking at his watch, the King replied:

"It is now precisely two minutes after ten. You shall have three days' time—but not a minute longer. If you find the two words by then, you win the crown; if you don't, out you go to join the Red Chatterlings!"

Tip o'Tongue left the palace to look for Toby Trubble. It was hard finding him, though, for a heavy fog had fallen. But the Prince at last succeeded. He soon told Toby of all that had happened, and of what he had to do. The task did not seem to worry Toby at all. He smiled his broadest smile, and said:

"That's easy. As easy as turning hand-springs." And he almost turned one—but not quite.

"That's all very well," Prince Tip o'Tongue said, "but

can you think of two words that mean exactly the same thing?"

"I have done more than that already," said Toby, "I've just thought of three!" and he almost turned a flip-flop.

"What are the words?" asked Tip o'Tongue.

"FOG, HAZE and MIST!" Toby answered.

"If the King gives me a crown for those, Toby, I'll give you *three* ribbons for your hat," Prince Tip o'Tongue said. "I'll go right away and see what he thinks of them."

The King didn't seem to think very much of those words.

"For," said he, "fog is a watery vapor, much like steam; mist is rain, falling in many tiny drops; haze is a vapor, too, it isn't so damp as fog."

Toby didn't feel so cheerful after Prince Tip o'Tongue told him what the King had said. The task wasn't so easy as it had seemed. He thought and he thought and he

thought; but he couldn't think of two words that meant exactly the same thing!

"Let's ask Angelina about it," Toby said; "I don't think she can do it—but you never can tell."

They found Angelina in the kitchen, baking spiced apple tarts. They told her what Tip o'Tongue had to do and why he had to do it.

"It's partly my fault," Angelina exclaimed, "for I helped choose the coronet! Of course, I'll try."

But try as she would, she *couldn't* think of two words that meant exactly the same thing. And all her apple tarts burned while she was trying to do it. And so she had to bake more.

Tip o'Tongue and Toby left Angelina to her baking. On the street they met five friends and told them of Tip o'Tongue's task. All five were most anxious to help—but not one of them could. Not just then! Each one thought he could, though, if he had a little time to think.

"Let's go somewhere and stay by ourselves until we find those two words," said Toby.

So it was agreed. His friends packed their clothes each in a hand bag of one sort or another; Tip o'Tongue packed his in a knapsack.

All in line they marched out of the town and down a road that led to the sea. A few miles away they found an old deserted house. It was an attractive place, with the woods all around, and there they stopped.

Aeekins, Beekins, Ceekins, Deekins and Eekins were the names of Tip o'Tongue's friends. They went inside the old house with him to look it over, while Toby was looking around outside. He hadn't been doing it very long before he shouted:

"I've found them! I've found them!"

Tip o'Tongue rushed to an open window and shouted back:

"What have you found, Toby?"

"I've found the two words!"

"What are they, Toby?"

"SHRUB and BUSH!" Toby answered.

Tip o'Tongue went back to the palace as fast as he could go, and it only took him about thirty minutes to do it. But the King said he couldn't give him the crown for those words because:

"A shrub has only one stem growing from its root—but a bush has several."

Sadly Prince Tip o'Tongue returned to the Chatterlings. He had failed and all of them knew it when they saw him coming with only a hat on his head. The King hadn't even put a band around it, which was very discouraging. And Tip o'Tongue felt worse than ever when he learned that Toby Trubble's sister Angelina, had been by—to offer him a ride in her goat cart.

To cheer the Prince up, they took him down to the beach for a swim. Not far out many vessels rode at anchor. Toby's eyes sparkled when he saw them, and he exclaimed:

"Now I have the right words!"

"What are they?" asked Tip o'Tongue.

"SHIP and BOAT!"

"Perhaps," said Tip o'Tongue, "perhaps you have. At least I can take them to the King and find out."

But alas! Toby was wrong again, for when he heard those two words the King said:

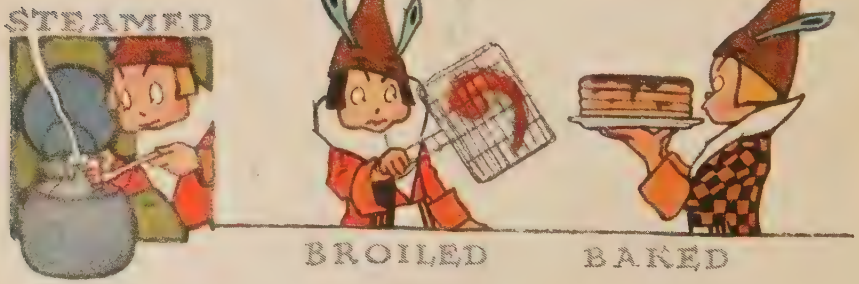
"They are both vessels—true enough; but a ship has three masts with square sails, while a boat is usually a small open vessel propelled by oar, pole or paddle. No. No. Try again Tip o'Tongue."

Tip o'Tongue returned to the house to talk it over with the others. It was going to be very hard to find the two words; that was plain. They might have to stay in camp until the very last minute. So they decided to get blankets

and bedding, and cooking utensils and things like that. Just in case.

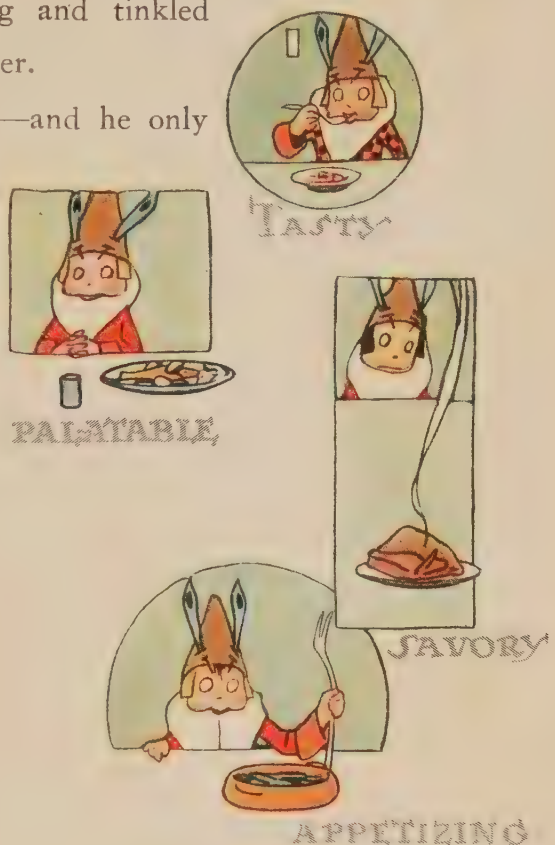
It was nearly five o'clock when they returned from town with these and high time to start supper. While they were getting it, the Prince stood apart, trying his best to think of two words that meant exactly the same thing; with no luck at all!

The others, seeing how sad he had grown, made up their minds to prepare a meal such as no prince had ever sat

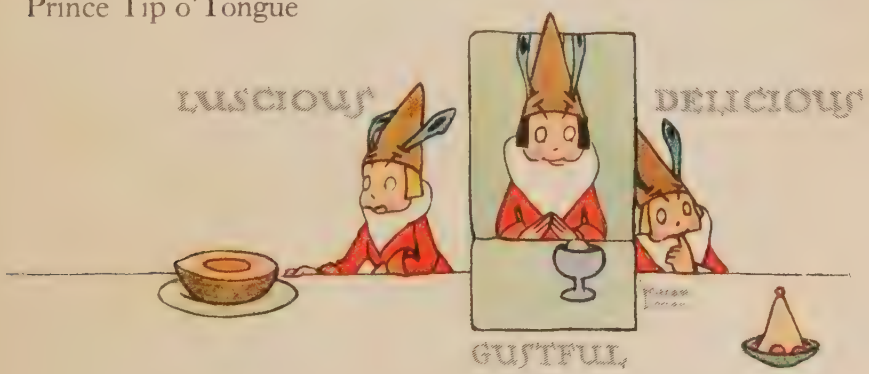


down to before. Kettles, pots, pans and broiling irons fairly rattled around; serving plates, cups, saucers, knives, forks and glasses rang and tinkled as they touched together.

Toby set the table—and he only dropped two plates and a saucer doing it. They didn't break, though. The others did the cooking. Toby couldn't cook; but he watched carefully to see that nothing burned—and that no salt got into the dessert. That he was *most* careful about.



Prince Tip o'Tongue



just had to notice what was going on, at last, and when he saw them all so busy in so many different ways, he began to wonder if the two words he wanted had anything to do with what they were doing.

He thought of seven such words—and wrote them down on paper; but when he looked them over . . . alas! they all meant something different.

This made him sadder than ever. But the meal was ready by that time, and at six o'clock, promptly, the Chatterlings served supper.

And such a supper! It was a wonder the table could hold so much. There were soups and consommes, both jellied and hot; there were chops, steaks and chickens, asparagus, cauliflower, peas and sweet potatoes. There were muffins and biscuits and parkerhouse rolls. There was jelly and honey and syrup and jam. There were puddings and pies, candied fruits and preserves—and maple, chocolate, peach, strawberry *and* vanilla ice cream!

Of course, Prince Tip o'Tongue was pleased—and he ate, and he ate, and he ate; and that pleased all the others; so they ate and they ate and they ate. It took them about forty-eight minutes to eat all there was—for, of course, they didn't eat too fast.

Toby Trubble cleared the table, only dropping one plate and a cup. The rest of the Chatterlings washed the dishes.

But not Prince Tip o'Tongue. He just thought. About Angelina and the King and the crown—and things like that. After washing the dishes, the rest of them thought, too. And Toby thought of two words:

"DELICIOUS and SAVORY! Don't they mean the same thing?" he asked.

"No," said Tip o'Tongue, "not exactly."

Toby was silent for awhile, and then he burst out again:

"TASTY and APPETIZING! Don't *they* mean the same thing?"

"No," said Tip o'Tongue, "not exactly."

A long pause followed and then Toby said, in a lower voice, this time:

"LUSCIOUS and PALATABLE—don't *they* mean the same thing?"

And once again Tip o'Tongue had to answer:

"No, they don't!"

Toby happened to glance at one of the windows. Then he went over to it and peered out, intently. He thought he saw something and he raised his hand and whispered:

"Hush—"

"What was it, Toby?" asked Aeekins, in a very low voice.

"I thought I saw someone outside," Toby answered.

"Was it a Chatterling, Toby?" asked Beekins.

"I thought it was . . . and I thought he had a *red* hat!"

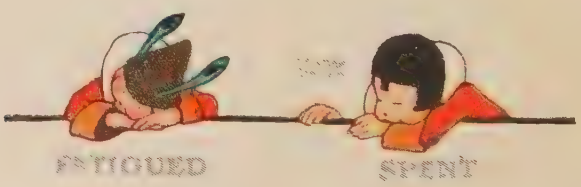
"Oh!" said Prince Tip o'Tongue to that; and the rest of them all said:

"Ooh!"

They peered out of the window anxiously, but no sign of a Red Chatterling could they see. They told each other that Toby had probably been mistaken and that made them feel better. And because they were tired, drowsy, weary, sleepy, exhausted and fatigued, they went to bed.

But they locked the door and the windows first!

Bright and early the next morning they were awake and up. They raced to get dressed and Toby Trubble won. At least, he was the first outside. But Toby had forgotten to put his pantaloons on . . . so he had to go back and dress all over.



He didn't mope, though. He turned a cartwheel —nearly. Indeed, he came closer to it than he had ever come before. Then he tried to think of two words that meant the same thing, for he did want to see Tip o'Tongue wearing the crown.

He got to thinking, Toby did, about the vessels he had seen the day before. He got to thinking about rope ladders and halyards and rigging and things like that:

Suddenly he gave a yell that brought Tip o'Tongue and all the

others to him as fast as they could come . . . . . .

He had thought of two words that might win the crown for Tip o'Tongue—ROPE and HAWSER. Then Aeekins thought of CABLE.

The King had gone to bed late, the night before. He had heard where Tip o'Tongue and his friends were staying, and it had worried him. The town where the Red Chatterlings lived was only a few miles away from there, and the King knew that they were in a most rebellious mood.

He made up for his lost sleep in the morning, and he had not yet had breakfast when Tip o'Tongue arrived. As soon as he saw him, Prince Tip o'Tongue said:

"GoodmorningsireROPECABLEHAWSER!"

He spoke so rapidly that the King could not understand him. So he rubbed his eyes, gave a royal yawn, blinked once or twice, and then said:

"Prince, will you please repeat that . . . slowly?"

Prince Tip o'Tongue repeated very slowly this time: "Good morning, sire, ROPE, CABLE, HAWSER."

"Why, Prince," the King said, "why, Prince," he said, "you shock me. Those words are no more alike than a thread, a string and a clothes-line are alike. Why Prince," he repeated, "you positively shock me!"

The king was always hard to please before breakfast, and Tip o'Tongue should have known it.

The Chatterlings saw Tip o'Tongue long before he got back. They had climbed a tree to watch for him. When they saw him coming along, they knew that he had failed again, for he was still wearing a hat. So they all clambered slowly to the ground. All except Toby. He fell.

But he didn't hurt himself. He wouldn't have noticed it though, anyway, for he was thinking:

"How nice it would be if I had the two right words for Tip o'Tongue when he gets back."

Thinking about one thing and another in a wondering way, letting his mind go from this to that, the first thing he knew four words popped into his head. And it wouldn't surprise him any if Tip o'Tongue won *two* crowns with them.

By that time Prince Tip o'Tongue had arrived, so Toby whispered in his ear:

"COILS and SPIRALS!"

Tip o'Tongue whispered back in Toby's ear:

"Nonsense!"

But that didn't discourage Toby at all, for he whispered two more words in Tip o'Tongue's ear:

"TANGLES—SNARLS!"

And Tip o'Tongue whispered back:

"Utter nonsense!"

Tip o'Tongue was annoyed with Toby; but he didn't want anyone except Toby to know it.

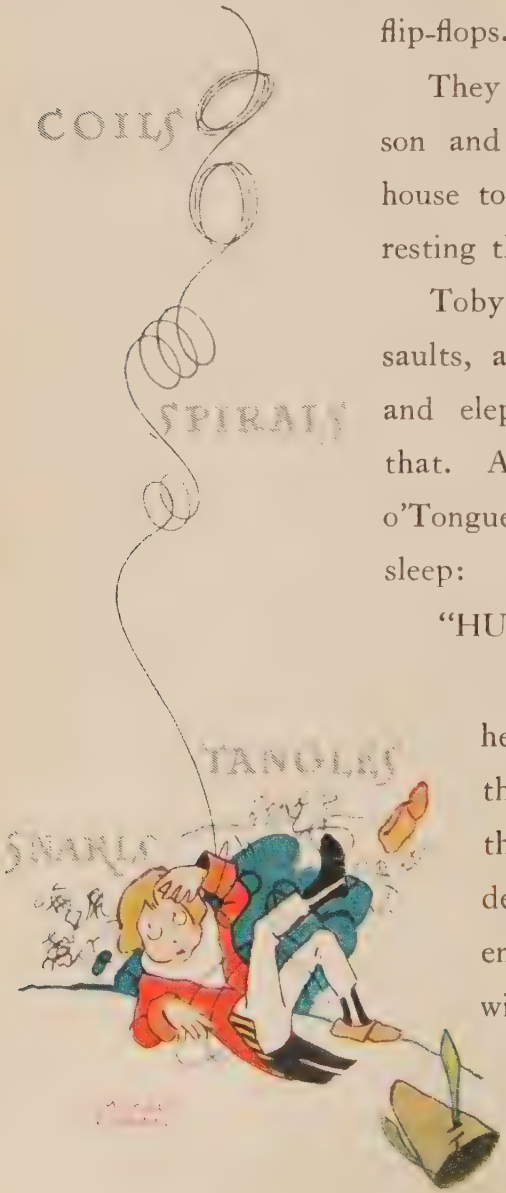
For Tip o'Tongue, being a prince, was never rude . . . *un*intentionally. No one was ever annoyed with Toby very long, and soon Tip o'Tongue was feeling friendly as ever. He took a walk with Toby, and when they were far away from the others, he tried with all his might to show Toby how to turn somersaults. And cartwheels. And flip-flops.

They were tired after the lesson and went back to the old house to rest. While they were resting they fell sound asleep.

Toby dreamed. About somersaults, and circuses, and clowns and elephants, and things like that. And he woke Prince Tip o'Tongue up by shouting in his sleep:

"HUGE and VAST!"

When Tip o'Tongue heard those words the first thing he thought of was the crown, and he wondered if they were close enough in meaning to win it.



Then he remembered that "vast" meant something that extended a long distance, like an ocean, or a range of mountains; and that "huge" meant something bulky—like the elephant Toby had been dreaming of. Tip o'Tongue got up very quietly and left the house.

Toby stayed there sleeping, while Tip o'Tongue went outside to find the rest of the Chatterlings. Right in front

of the door he happened to glance at the ground, and there he saw something that stopped him:

It was a long, broad, deep, footprint!

That footprint disturbed Tip o'Tongue. Only the shoe of a Red Chatterling could have made it.

When he discovered a number of other large tracks leading into the forest, his worry increased.

The others came in sight at that moment, and Tip o'Tongue beckoned to them. But he put one finger over his lips so that they would come quietly. They came on tip toes, without making a sound.

Tip o'Tongue pointed to the foot prints and when Aeekins, Beekins, Ceekins, Deekins and Eekins saw them, they all said:

"Oooh!"

That was all they could say, because their mouths were round with surprise.

"Let's follow those tracks," Prince Tip o'Tongue said, "and see where they lead."

And that's what they did. To the edge of the forest, into the forest, through the forest—and out on the other side. Then the tracks led over a sandy path to a road; but the road was so hard that no tracks showed on it.

The Chatterlings didn't know what to do then—so they held a council of war. The council of war decided to keep

on going. Up the road. Up and up and up they went. They passed some huts and some cottages, and a castle and a mansion and a palace. But nobody seemed to live in them.

They knocked at every single door, too, for they wanted to know if any one had seen a Red Chatterling.

The only living thing they saw was a cat. An unfriendly cat it was, too, for when Beekins tried to stroke her fur, she scratched him on the cheek.

While that was happening, Aeekins was scraping the soles of his shoes. Prince Tip o'Tongue stopped thinking about the Red Chatterlings for a moment to wonder if SCRAPE and SCRATCH meant the same thing. He concluded that they didn't, then they all marched on.

Soon they had left the buildings far behind, and the road led back to the forest. It wasn't a good road; it was soft and muddy. They had to watch carefully where they were stepping. Tip o'Tongue must have been watching more closely than anybody else for suddenly . . .

He saw the great foot print of a Red Chatterling!

And when the rest of them saw it they all said:

"Woooh!"

Of course that foot print was just what they had been looking for; but somehow or other it didn't cheer them any to find it.

"Let's go home," Aeekins said.

All of the others were willing, except Tip o'Tongue.

"NO," he said, "let's keep on going. I want to see where these foot prints lead. But we will go quietly."

So they crept on and on and on. And then — almost before they knew it — they found that they were following more than one pair of foot prints. Now there were two.

Then they all stood stock still in their own tracks, and they all said:

"Woooh!"

And Aeekins added:

"Let's go home."

But Tip o'Tongue wouldn't do it! So they followed the two sets of foot marks along the edge of the forest, and they went on and on and on.

SURPRISE

The road grew softer and muddier. That made the foot prints easier to see. They seemed to look larger, too. They weren't any larger, really, but there *were* more of them, and when the Chatterlings were sure of that, they all said:

"Wooooh!"

ASTONISH

DISMAY

And Beekins added: "Let's go home." But Tip o'Tongue wouldn't do it. So they continued to follow the tracks along the edge of the forest, and when the foot prints turned into a forest, the Chatterlings followed. But they went as quietly as they possibly could.

They just crept along through the dark forest—ever so slowly . . . and every time a twig snapped, they stood stock still!

They glanced to the left, they glanced to the right, they glanced behind them, and every time the leaves rustled, they stood stock still.

But Prince Tip o'Tongue kept his eyes fastened on those tracks, and the others kept just as close to him as they could.

They went through the thickest, densest part of the woods. After a while it grew a little lighter, and the first thing they knew they had come out on the other side.

And there, right in front of them, stood their own old house!

They certainly were glad to see it. They ran toward its open door, but before they reached it, they stopped—stock still . . . because:

In the soft sand was a large number of large, broad, deep foot prints!

They all crept back into the woods again—to hide behind some bushes. From there they watched the house. Before very long they saw a great, huge Red Chatterling appear in the doorway. He came out, and another and another and another and another came out after him. Then some more came out . . . and Toby Trubble came with them.

And Toby's hands were tied behind his back!

Tip o'Tongue did not know what to do. Nor did any of the others. So they stayed in hiding until Toby and the Red Chatterlings had disappeared in the woods. Then they slipped into the house, as quietly as they could.

They found a note on the table that the Red Chatterlings had left. Prince Tip o'Tongue read it aloud:

"We know all about Prince Tip o'Tongue's task. He shall never perform it!"

"But how did they know?" asked Aeekins.

"When I told Toby about it there was a thick fog in the air. One of them must have been lurking close by, and overheard me."

"We ought to rescue Toby," Aeekins said, "but we can't leave Tip o'Tongue here alone."

"I'm going along," said the Prince, "and I'm going to start right now!"

"But we can't go now," said Aeekins. "It's growing dark."

"And it's going to rain," Beekins added, looking out of the window.

"And blow—"

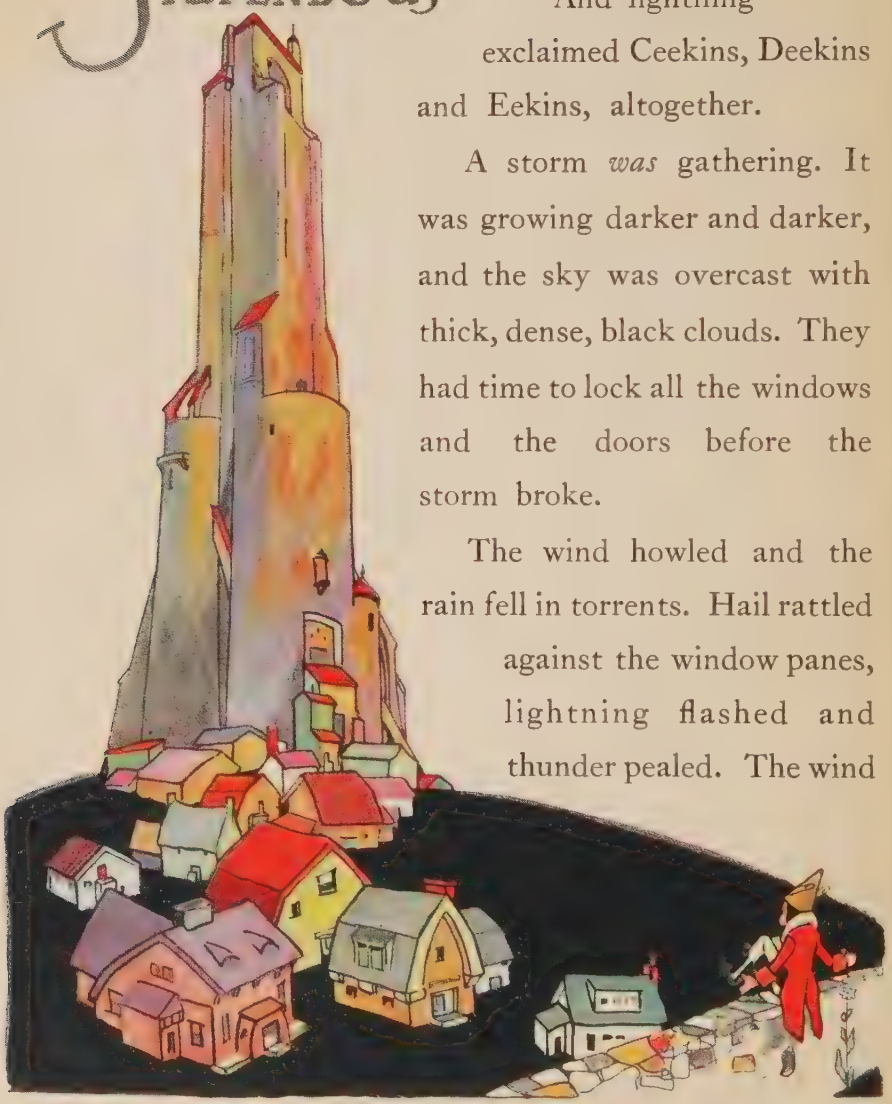
"And thunder—"

"And lightning—"

exclaimed Ceekins, Deekins and Eekins, altogether.

A storm *was* gathering. It was growing darker and darker, and the sky was overcast with thick, dense, black clouds. They had time to lock all the windows and the doors before the storm broke.

The wind howled and the rain fell in torrents. Hail rattled against the window panes, lightning flashed and thunder pealed. The wind



increased and limbs were broken from the trees with the sound of musket shots.

After a while the booming of the thunder lessened. The wind decreased and the rain ceased to fall. The storm gradually died away and at last the sky cleared.

But the sun had set. The stars were out and a full moon was rising. The Chatterlings gathered around Tip o'Tongue to talk about Toby. They were planning how to rescue him when—

Somebody knocked at the door!

It was a loud knock—and unexpected. They were all startled. Tip o'Tongue quietly tip-toed to the door. The others followed him. They put their hands behind their ears and they listened with all their might.

Somebody knocked again!

And he knocked harder this time, too, and after

the knocking they heard the whisper of a low voice saying:

"Let me in—oh, please, let me in!"

Recognizing the voice, Prince Tip o'Tongue threw the door wide open . . .

And Toby Trubble stumbled in!

He was a sight. His clothing was tattered and torn, and his collar was all awry. One shoe was gone, and the other lacked a sole. He was splattered with mud from his head to his feet. His coat and his shirt and his pantaloons and his stockings were all soaking wet, but . . .

He had a smile on his face!

And oh! how glad they were to see him! They shook both his hands—and Prince Tip o'Tongue hugged him. They got hot water, and soap, and towels, and fresh clothes, and they built a fire in the fire-place while he was getting cleaned up. And they gave him the nicest chair.

Then Toby told his story.

Tip o'Tongue had left him sound asleep. Toby did not know how long he had slept, but when he woke up, to his great astonishment, the room was full of Chatterlings—Red Chatterlings! Large ones, too . . . and fierce.

They glared at Toby, and when he asked them what they wanted, they would not answer; they tied his hands with rope, and marched him into the woods.

They made him march through the thickest, deepest, densest part of the forest. They wanted him to go faster, but he couldn't because his hands were tied, and he stumbled when he tried to. So they untied his hands and made him run along in front of them. When he didn't go fast enough they prodded him with sardine forks, so he kept as far ahead as he could.

At last they came to the town where the Red Chatterlings lived. A stone wall stood all around the place, and in the middle of the town rose the highest, tallest, biggest building that Toby had ever seen.

"A most STUPENDOUS building," Toby said it was.

Once in the town the Red Chatterlings started to shout at the top of their voices. And they made the din worse by clashing the sardine forks together. Doors opened and other Red Chatterlings came out; still more poked their heads through windows, and all of them jeered at Toby. And they called him names; but they soon stopped doing that and went into the houses again. It had started to rain!

Toby's captors ran to the big building for shelter, and Toby had to run in front of them. Fast, too, on account of the sardine forks.

Toby was about five yards ahead of them when he reached the big building, and he went right inside. The

Enormous

first thing he saw was a stairway, and he kept on running up that. The Red Chatterlings ran after him, but they couldn't run up the stairs as fast as Toby could on account of their heavy, wooden shoes. They had to stop to take them off. That gave Toby time to get two flights ahead of them.

Then Toby ran along a hall until he came to another flight of stairs. Those, he ran *down*, as fast as he could go. When he got to the ground floor there wasn't a single Red Chatterling anywhere about. Toby ran outside at the top of his speed and he slammed the door behind him!

The storm was at its height. It was raging!

"The worst storm I was ever in," Toby said it was. "A most TREMENDOUS storm," he called it.

None of the Red Chatterlings came out after him—on account of the storm, perhaps. Or perhaps they were still running *up* stairs.

Toby didn't wait to see. He had trouble finding his way through the streets of the town, though he did it at last. A dog was the only living thing he saw.

"A most ENORMOUS dog it was," said Toby, "but ever so friendly."

Indeed, it even led him to the path he had come by and along that path Toby ran until he reached its end. From

there he came home without further trouble—and that was his story.

It was late now, and they were all tired and sleepy. They went to bed.

Tip o'Tongue lay awake a long time. He was thinking of three words that Toby had used: STUPENDOUS, TREMENDOUS, ENORMOUS.

After thinking them over he decided that stupendous meant something so big that it would stupify one just to look at it; that something tremendous would cause one to tremble. Enormous, he thought, meant something much bigger than the ordinary, or normal thing. After thinking those things out, he went to sleep.

The next morning, Prince Tip o'Tongue wondered if the others would want to go home. Though they felt like it, not one of them would.

"No," Toby said, speaking for all, "the two words that mean exactly the same thing have not yet been found . . . and we only have until two minutes after ten tomorrow to find them."

Which pleased Tip o'Tongue so much that he said:

"If we do find the words in time, every one of you shall have a band for his hat, and Toby shall have two."

"Suppose, though," said Aeekins to the Prince, "suppose the words are found . . . and then suppose that the

Red Chatterlings capture you before you take them to the King. What will we do then?"

Well, that was something to think about, and they did; but they couldn't think of the right thing to do. So they all went back to the palace to see what the King thought.

When they got there, he was still in bed, but he sent a message to them. It was written on parchment and rolled up. It was bound with green ribbon and sealed with red sealing wax. Tip o'Tongue's name was on the outside, so the Prince opened it, and read it out loud.

"I have been informed of your arrival, but I have not had my breakfast yet. Wait for me in the royal orchard, and eat all the apples you want while waiting."

In the orchard they found one tree that had many different kinds of apples growing on it: Baldwins, Russets, Winesaps, Greenings and a few more that hadn't been named yet. Growing different varieties on the same tree was one of the King's hobbies.

He was very particular about his trees, and the Chatterlings were careful not to break any branches. To get the apples, Aeekins stood on a stone wall. He dropped them into Beekins' hands. They gathered a hatful, and ate them.

Between bites, Tip o'Tongue thought of three words: OBTAIN — RECEIVE — ACQUIRE. He was wondering

about them when the King entered the garden, and to him Toby repeated his story.

As Toby proceeded, the King's face grew grave . . . he frowned, too, and at every pause he said "humph." When the story was finished he said "humph" three times in suc-

cession, and he strode up and down, thinking, thinking, thinking.

The King thought hard for thirteen minutes and twenty-seven seconds; then he sat down and thought some more. At last he spoke:

"The Red Chatterlings are making trouble all over the Kingdom. Reports of their mischief come in, every hour. One of them caught my favorite parrot—and would you believe it? In three hours he had it saying things it had never said in its life before. Why the poor bird asked the Royal Housekeeper for some cyanide of potassium when it really wanted bicarbonate of soda! Fancy that! I think you had all

better leave the old house at the edge of the woods and come home."

"But I must find the right words by tomorrow morning," Tip o'Tongue said. "The others are helping me. We must stay together. It's quiet out there, with nothing to interfere with the search."

"Well, if you must stay there, you must," said the King, "but don't stay a second longer than you have to. Have you a watch?"

"No," Tip o'Tongue answered, "none of us have."

"Take mine," said the King, "and come back tomorrow morning, whether you find the words, or not. In the meantime I will do something about the Red Chatterlings. Is there anything else?"

"I wanted to ask you about three words: OBTAIN, RECEIVE, ACQUIRE. Are two of them alike?"

"Not exactly," the King replied. "Obtain and acquire are close, though. A person may receive a thing without effort, but he has to exert himself to obtain anything. He would expect to keep anything that he acquired. You obtained apples. If you get the Kingdom, you will have acquired it, expecting to keep it. You might acquire wisdom, too, from books—though it's surprising how few have."

After thanking him, they left.

In ordinary, happy times the King would not have wor-

ried about them living alone, so far outside the town walls. With the Red Chatterlings making so much trouble, though, he worried a good deal. So he sent for the Royal Master of the Hounds, and when he appeared, the King questioned him, asking:

"Is the dog Momus in the Royal Kennel?"

"Yes," answered the Hound Master, "the dog Momus is in the Royal Kennel."

"Good," said the King, and then he instructed the Hound Master to do so and so and such and such.

That was why, when Tip o'Tongue and the rest of them got back to the old house they found, directly in their path—

A very large dog kennel!

A heavy chain was fastened to the front of it. The other end led into the kennel. Once in a while it rattled. The Chatterlings went closer, but they went very carefully. On the front of the kennel they read the words:

"Beware of the Dog."

Then Aeekins said:

"Let's go back to the town."

"No, indeed!" said Tip o'Tongue.

He went to the house, the rest of them following; but they kept as far away from the kennel as they could. The dog stayed inside as they went by, but they heard the chain

rattle, and they heard a muffled tattoo that might have been caused by a wagging tail.

And another sound came out of that kennel, too; it sounded like a laugh!

Inside the house, another surprise awaited them. A large refrigerator was standing in the middle of the floor. "Food for Momus," was printed over its door.

"Momus must be the dog's name," said Tip o'Tongue as he opened the door of the refrigerator. It was filled with all kinds of dog food—sausages and biscuits, bones and such.

Toby took one of the bones out to the kennel. When Momus saw (or smelt) it, he came right out, wagging his tail very hard. And Toby felt certain he heard Momus laugh.

But before he would take the bone, Momus went back into the kennel again. He came out with an envelope in his mouth. He gave that to Toby and then he took the bone; but before he started munching it, he wagged a "thank you" with his tail.

The envelope was addressed to Tip o'Tongue, and he read it out loud:

"To Tip o'Tongue—Greeting:

The dog's name is Momus.

As a pup he fell into the hands of some Red Chatterlings who were most unkind to him. When his mother learned what had happened, she went into the woods to

get him back. But the Red Chatterlings wouldn't give him up. Momus' mother became so sad that she never wagged her tail again. And she died of a broken heart.

When Momus grew up and heard about this he ran away from the Red Chatterlings at once. He never had liked them, anyway; but after that he barked and growled whenever one of them came within a mile of him; but he *never* barks or growls at anyone else. He will be a very good watch dog for you."

The King had signed the letter himself, and added a postscript, which read:

P. S.

Don't be surprised if you hear Momus laugh. He does it often—unless he is thinking about his mother.

"Aren't you glad that we didn't go back before we found out about Momus?" Tip o'Tongue asked Aeekins.

"I wanted to do the PRUDENT thing," Aeekins answered.

"But Tip o'Tongue wanted to do the WISE thing," Toby said.

"It's always wise to be prudent," said Aeekins.

"Not at all," said Toby, "a prudent person *avoids* unpleasant things; but a wise man *overcomes* them."

Momus wagged his tail gratefully when they unchained him. And he touched each one of them with his nose, and

wagged his tail some more. He walked round his kennel, and he walked around the house . . . sniffing, and sniffing, and wagging his tail.

But when he came to the place where the Red Chatterlings had made the tracks, his tail stopped wagging. He showed his teeth—and growled. Soon he stopped growling to gaze down the road . . . and his tail started wagging again.

The Chatterlings looked in the same direction but they couldn't see anything unusual. After awhile they heard a faint sound, which grew louder and louder.

"Plippity plop, plippity plop,"—it sounded like running hoofs. "PLIPPITY PLOP, PLIPPITY PLOP," it *was* the sound of running hoofs . . . goats' hoofs. Angelina Trubble's goats, and they soon appeared over a hill in the distance. They were harnessed to a cart and in the cart sat Angelina.

Momus bounded up the road to meet her, and the Chatterlings ran after him. As she got out of the cart he licked her hand and wagged his tail and sniffed at the goats' hoofs; but the goats didn't like having their hoofs sniffed, so Momus, with rare tact, stopped doing it. He wagged his tail at them, though, and they wagged their tails back, and so they made friends.

Angelina had brought out a picnic lunch. With flowers,

Toby thought it would seem more like a real party. So he went and got some, and he took Beekins with him. They got so many that they could not put them all on the table, so they put most of them in Angelina's goat cart.

"Thanks," Angelina said, "it must have been a task, getting so many."

"It wasn't a task at all, it was a —" Toby was going to say "pleasure" but Ceekins interrupted to say:

"It was a chore."

"CHORE and TASK?" Angelina asked, "Don't they mean the same thing?"

Tip o'Tongue jumped three feet up into the air when he heard that question, and Toby said:

"Ho! Ho!" and the others said:

"Hum! Hum!"

Not one of them could see

RAGGED

SLIT

TORN

any difference between those two words.

"It's five minutes after eleven," said Tip o'Tongue, looking at the watch the King had given him. "Plenty of time to reach the palace before they serve lunch. If Angelina will excuse me, I'll leave at once."

"I'll take you in the goat cart,"

RENT

FRAYED

RIPPED

TATTERED

Angelina said. So Tip o'Tongue stepped into it, and was driven to the palace. After thanking Angelina, Tip o'Tongue went to the throne room where he found the King.

"Well Prince," was the King's greeting, "did Momus arrive?"

"Yes," Tip o'Tongue answered, "he did, and many thanks for him."

"You are more than welcome."

"Also, I have two words for you."

"What are they?" the King asked.

"CHORE and TASK!"

The King had taken off his crown while he was waiting for Tip o'Tongue to speak. After Tip o'Tongue had spoken he put it back on his head, at the same time saying:

"Not yet, Prince. Not yet. But don't be discouraged for they are not so very different in meaning."

"Well, what is the difference between them?" Tip o'Tongue asked.

"A chore is a bit of light work, usually something or other about the house or grounds; something apart from the regular work of the day. A task is something one does because one is told to do it. You are performing a task in finding two words that mean exactly the same thing; but those two words are not CHORE and TASK."

The old King was really quite sorry for Tip o'Tongue.

He made him sit down on the steps leading to the throne and he ordered Banbury Cross buns and ginger ale brought in. With his own royal hands he picked out the buns that had the most sugar on top and those he gave to Tip o'Tongue. All that were left over (and there were many), he had packed up in a red leather box that had the royal crest stamped on it. He gave it to Tip o'Tongue to take back to the other Chatterlings as a mark of the royal favor.

But before Tip o'Tongue left, the King said to him:

"Watch your words most carefully, Prince, for many that seem to be just alike are not. Take QUIT and STOP for instance—do they seem alike to you?"

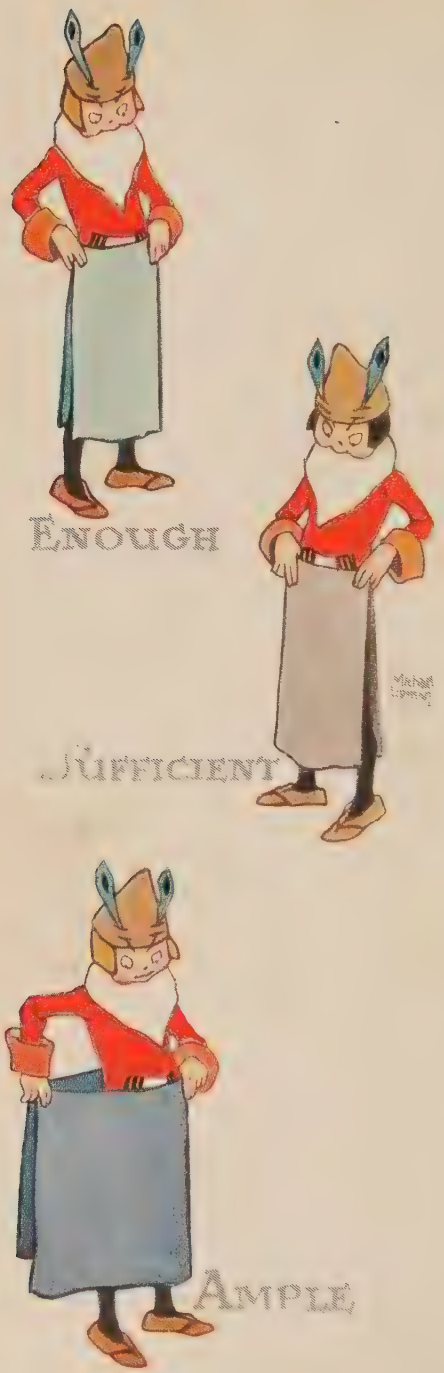
"Why, yes," said Tip o'Tongue, "they do."

"But they are not alike," said the King. "You might *stop* work to rest awhile; but if you *quit* work you would leave the job altogether."

Then he patted Tip o'Tongue on the head; but as soon as Tip o'Tongue left the room, he removed his crown to pat his own head with a purple silk handkerchief.

He had really outgrown that crown long ago. It was now too tight—and it hurt his head.

"The sooner Tip o'Tongue finds those words, the better I shall like it," he said to himself. Then he hung the crown on one of the posts of his throne, where he couldn't even see



it. He bowed his head until his chin rested on his chest . . . and fell sound asleep!

When the Chatterlings saw Tip o'Tongue coming back with a red leather box that had the royal crest upon it, they thought that the crown was inside. And they all gathered round to see the box opened. When they found that it contained Banbury Cross buns, with plenty of sugar on top, and with lots of raisins just popping out of them, they were disappointed, of course. But not as deeply disappointed as they might have been. For the King had at least given Tip o'Tongue *something* and that was encouraging.

One of the buns they gave to Momus, who seemed to enjoy it very much, indeed.

Later in the day something seemed to worry Momus. He sniffed and he sniffed and he sniffed. And every time he sniffed he frowned. His tail stopped wagging, and his lips curled up to show four large pointed white teeth. Suddenly he darted away and ran with all his might toward a nearby blackberry patch, and all the Chatterlings ran after him.

Momus should have stopped when he reached that patch, but he didn't. He ran right in and the Chatterlings

ran in after him. Momus didn't get very far on account of the thorns. They caught in his thick fur coat. He tried to come out again, but he couldn't get loose until Tip o'Tongue and the others helped him. Momus was glad to get out of that field, and he wagged his tail gratefully.

The others were glad to get out, too, for their hands and faces were badly scratched. As to their clothing, well—

Their pantaloons showed no less than seven different kinds of damage; in fact, three pairs of them were gone beyond repair!

Toby had to go all the way back to town for cloth to make new ones.

Before cutting the cloth they held it up to see if there was enough of it. When Tip o'Tongue saw how much there was in the first piece he called out:

"AMPLE."

When he looked at the second piece he called:

"SUFFICIENT."

And the third time he called out:

"ENOUGH."

After thinking of those words a moment or two Toby shouted:

"ENOUGH and SUFFICIENT mean exactly the same thing!" "Toby is right," the others said, "ENOUGH and SUFFICIENT *are* the self-same thing!"

And Tip o'Tongue thought so, too. But Toby and the Prince, and all the rest of them were wrong. The King pointed out the error, for Tip o'Tongue left the others busily at work, while he sought out the King.

"Your Royal Highness," he said, "I have found the right words!"

"Prince," said the King, "Prince," he said, removing the crown from his head, which he patted gently with the purple silk handkerchief, "I most certainly do hope so. What are they this time?"

"ENOUGH and SUFFICIENT," Tip o'Tongue answered.

"Not close enough to win the crown," said the old King, putting it back on his head again. "For this reason: a greedy person *never* has enough, though he may have much more than sufficient. Do you see the difference?"

Tip o'Tongue did. So he left the palace to return at length to his friends. Momus was the first to welcome him. And Tip o'Tongue thought that even Momus looked at his hat in an odd sort of way . . . as though he had expected to see at least a colored band around it.

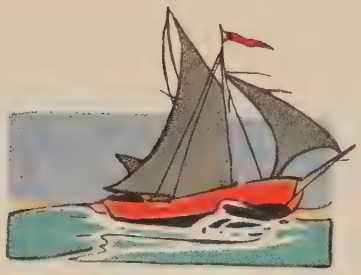
When Tip o'Tongue went inside, the Chatterlings all stopped work. They glanced at his head, saw only a plain, ordinary hat upon it, and went back to their work. But Toby sighed.

When the garments were all finished, Tip o'Tongue looked at them and said:

"Once I thought the words TROUSERS, BREECHES, PANTALOONS meant exactly the same thing. But now I know better. I wonder if *any* two words ever do mean exactly the same thing."

The rest of them wondered about that, too.

They stopped thinking of it to watch Momus. He was sniffing again, and the fur wrinkled over his eyes. Every little while he showed his teeth—and every time he showed his teeth he growled. He walked slowly toward the sea—with stiff legs and tense muscles.



The Chatterlings followed him clear to the beach. On the sand they saw seven small sailing vessels that had never been there before. Momus walked toward them, more tense than ever. And his nose was twitching all the time.

The Chatterlings walked closer, too, and when they got very close, they smelled the same thing Momus had smelled.

It was the odor of olive oil and sardines!

The vessels were deserted, so Momus and the Chatter-

lings went right up to them. The odor was very strong indeed, and Momus growled again.

"Let's go back," said Aeekins.

The Chatterlings were all quite willing to do that; but Momus wasn't. He stood stock still, pointing at a nearby sand dune with his nose. The Chatterlings looked at it, intently.

While they were looking, a dozen Red Chatterlings jumped from behind it and came running toward them. All were armed with sardine forks, and when Tip o'Tongue saw that, he shouted:

"Launch the boats and jump in!"

The Red Chatterlings saw them do it and ran faster than ever. But not fast enough to prevent the launching of the boats.

"Hoist the sails!" Tip o'Tongue shouted and the sails were up in a jiffy; but the Red Chatterlings' leader had reached the water's edge and he plunged in. As the vessels drifted away from the shore he dashed splashing along after them.

The wind made the boats move faster every second—but the Red Chatterling leader went fast, too. Faster than the boats . . . and he caught one of them before the water got too deep for him.

It was the boat that Tip o'Tongue had launched! Momus

was aboard it, sitting in the bow. When he saw the Red Chatterling grip the stern, Momus bounded at him.

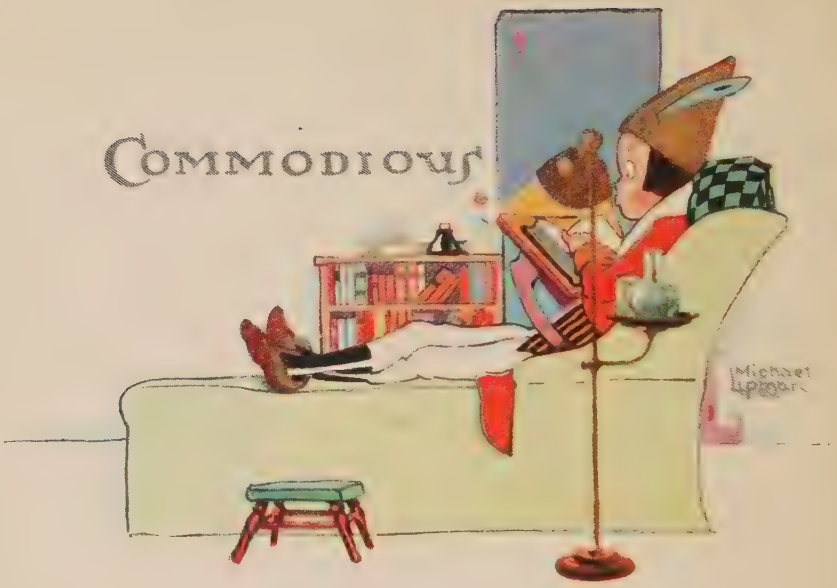
Well, when that Red Chatterling saw Momus flying through the air in his direction, he let go of the stern as quickly as he could snap his fingers open.

But the sardine fork in his mouth kept his jaws apart. The brine rushed in to make him splutter and choke. He lost his sardine fork and his hat and he had a terrible time reaching the shore.

The other Red Chatterlings only stood on the beach shaking their fists. They looked ridiculous, and Momus laughed at them! So loud that they heard him, far away as they were. Their knees shook with fright and they took to their heels as fast as they could go! Their leader ran faster than anyone else, all dripping wet as he was.

After they had disappeared in the distance, Tip o'Tongue and his friends tried to sail back to the beach. But the wind was blowing against them. It blew and it blew—so hard that they were blown twenty-three city blocks out to sea.

Gradually the direction of the wind changed. It blew more gently, and it blew toward the shore and before long it had blown them in again.



There wasn't a single Red Chatterling anywhere in sight; they landed and they went straight back to the old house at the edge of the woods.

Momus ran on ahead of them, wagging his tail all the time. They knew that there weren't any more Red Chatterlings around because Momus didn't growl once. Not once.

Upon getting back they fed Momus two sausages, three biscuits and a bone. He ate the sausages and biscuits, wagging his tail all the while. He buried the bone.

They were very proud of Momus and they praised him a lot. They talked about their adventure; and they spoke of the boats and the sea and the way the wind blew. It

was surprising, the number of words they used to describe the moving air. They counted six: WIND, SQUALL, GALE, TEMPEST, BREEZE, and HURRICANE.

Toby thought that tempest and hurricane were close enough to win the crown; but Tip o'Tongue thought that a tempest was usually accompanied by rain. He was right, too.

He also thought that the King should know about the doings of the Red Chatterlings. He decided to go to the palace to report. He promised to get another hat for Toby, too, because Toby's had blown overboard.

Momus went along. Tip o'Tongue told him to wait outside the palace gate, while he went inside to find the King. He looked in room after room. It took him some time to go all over the palace; there were so many rooms in it and they were all large ones.

For the first time in his life he noticed how spacious they were; then he began to wonder if there was any other word that meant the same thing that spacious meant. He thought of commodious. It seemed to mean exactly the same thing. So he decided to ask the King about it as soon as he found him.

Back of the palace there was a garden—a lovely garden, full of moss and grass and flowers and bushes and shrubs and trees. They were all fruit trees, too, and some of them had many different kinds of fruit on the same tree. The old king knew a great deal about that sort of thing. For very many years he had been trying to get a tree that would have apples, peaches, pears, cherries, plums, pineapples and bananas, all on the same branch.

The King spent a lot of time attending to these trees, and Tip o'Tongue found him at last, standing beside one of them. No less than four different kinds of fruit were ripening among its leaves and the King was observing them proudly. He had a trowel in one hand and a pair of prun-

ing shears in the other, and his crown was hanging on a nearby limb.

When he saw Tip o'Tongue before him, he put the tools down, mopped his brow, put his crown back on his head, and said:

"Hello, Prince!"

"Hello, Your Royal Highness!"

"You wish to see me about something?"

"About the Red Chatterlings," Tip o'Tongue answered, and then he told the King all that had happened.

After the Prince had finished, the King spent a long time in thought.

"I have thought of a plan that may curb the Red Chatterlings," he said. "I shall carry it out very soon, too, and then you won't have to worry about them any more. Was there something else you wished to say?"

"I have thought of two more words," Tip o'Tongue replied.

"What are they?"

"COMMODIOUS and SPACIOUS," said Tip o'Tongue. The King didn't say anything at all, so Tip o'Tongue added:

"I think they mean the same thing."

"I *know* they do not," said the King.

"I thought they did," said Tip o'Tongue.

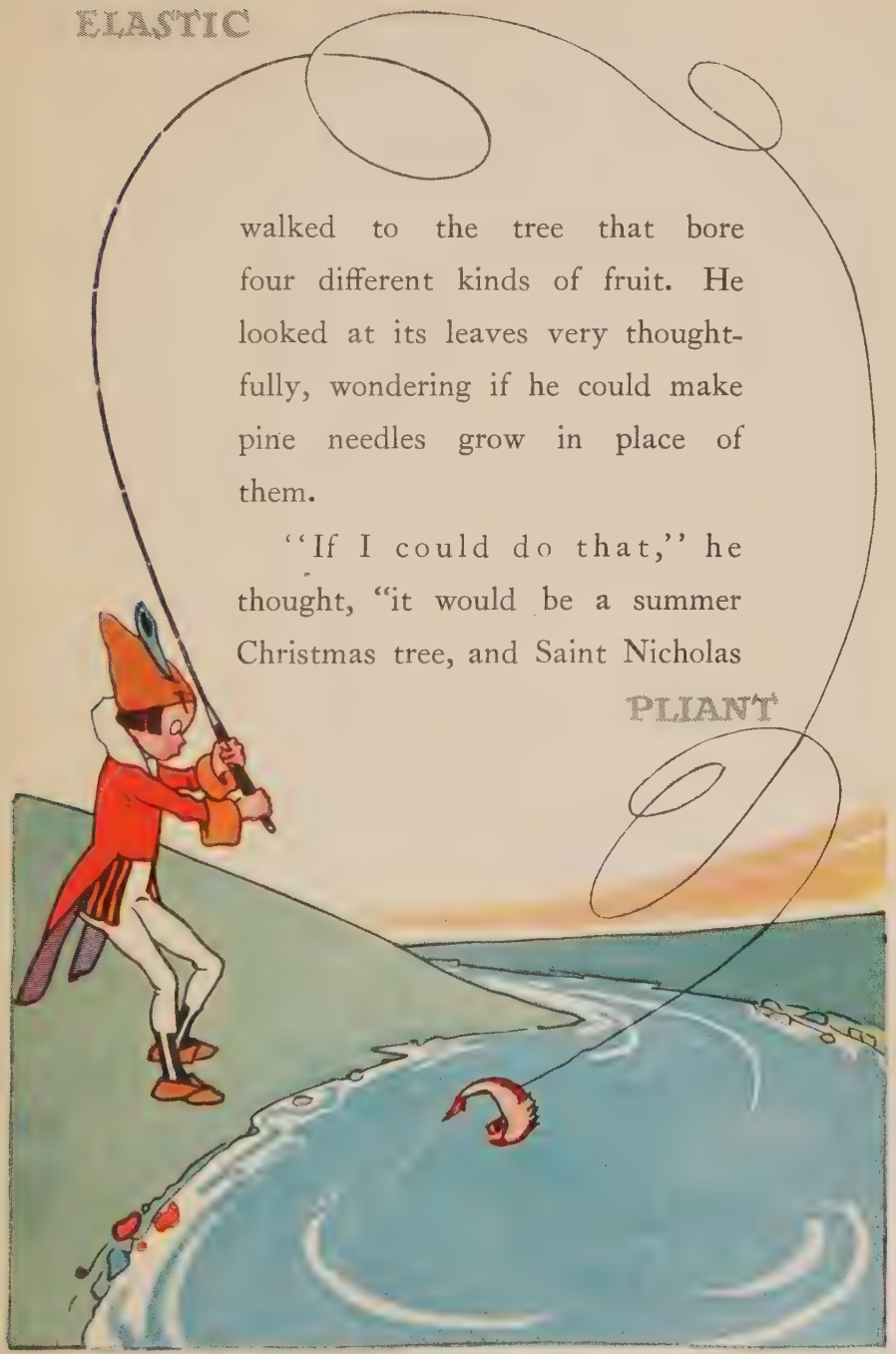
"A goodly number of other people think so, too. But they are wrong. SPACIOUS means large, as a room or a garden may be large while a COMMODIOUS room might be small. But it would have to have in it, close at hand, just those things one would happen to want."

As the King stopped speaking a parrot hopped over and perched on his shoulder.

"Polly wants a cracker," it croaked. The King took one from his pocket and gave it to him.

"I like parrots," said the King. "They seldom misuse words. When they want a cracker, they don't ask for a muffin, or a crumpet, or a parkerhouse roll; they ask for a *cracker!* Owls are nice, too. Of course they can only hoot, but they do it in a most expressive way."

The King stopped talking, picked up his trowel, and


ELASTIC
walked to the tree that bore four different kinds of fruit. He looked at its leaves very thoughtfully, wondering if he could make pine needles grow in place of them.
"If I could do that," he thought, "it would be a summer Christmas tree, and Saint Nicholas
PLIANT

could put toys under it on the fourth of July."

He watered its roots (for the sun had gone down), and turning to Tip o'Tongue, he said:

"It grows late. You had better spend the night here at the palace."

"But Momus is waiting outside for me. And I promised to bring back another hat for Toby."

"Send Momus back with the hat," said the King, "and put a note in it for Toby and the others, telling of your plans."

"But I wanted to talk about words with the others."

"Think about them, here at the palace, instead—that will answer as well. If you cannot find them tonight, return to Toby early in the morning. That would still give you a few hours to talk it over with him, and the rest."

That was what the Prince did. First he wrote the note to Toby, and put it in a hat that Angelina gave him. While Momus was sniffing the hat Tip o'Tongue said:

"Take it to its owner!" Whereupon Momus dashed away with it.

The next morning Prince Tip o'Tongue was up with the sun. While eating breakfast, which was served in the garden, his eye fell on the King's purple silk

handkerchief. Tip o'Tongue picked it up and put it in his pocket, intending to return it to the King as soon as he saw him.

Breakfast finished, he started to think about words; OBSERVE and LOOK were the first two that he thought of. After thinking more about them he decided that they would not do. Because one might look for something and not see it at all; anything one observed had to be seen clearly.

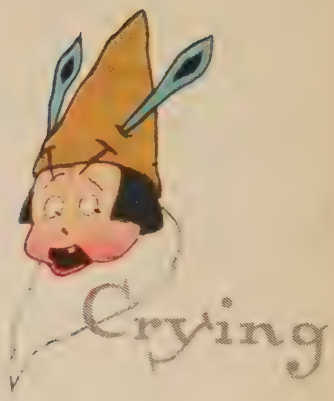
A tree close by, sadly twisted out of its normal form, suggested DISTORT and MISSHAPE.

"They are exactly alike in meaning," he said to himself. He felt so certain of it that he could almost feel the crown upon his head . . . but he happened to remember that a thing could only be distorted by twisting, while it could be misshaped in almost any way.

He sighed and looked at the watch. It was two minutes after six.

"That leaves exactly four hours. I *must* get those words!"

The branches of a willow tree, swaying in the breeze, suggested ELASTIC and PLIANT. Just as he thought of them, the King entered the garden. He was trundling a wheelbarrow that had a rake, and a hoe, and a watering



can in it, all marked with the Royal Crest, done in French enamel.

"I see you are up bright and early," the King said. "What have you been doing?"

"Trying to think of different words that mean the same thing."

"Any luck?" asked the King.

"I've just this second thought of ELASTIC and PLIANT," Prince Tip o'Tongue replied.

"Think about them some more," said the King, "and you will notice the difference between them. A thing is pliant that bends easily, like a fishing line. A fishing rod is elastic—not because it bends, but because it won't *stay* bent. That is the difference."

The King's words made Tip o'Tongue feel sad. He tried not to show it, though, when he said farewell. He tried to smile as cheerfully as he could, but the King knew how he was feeling, for he had the same feeling himself.

The sun was shining brightly as Prince Tip o'Tongue hurried away. He walked as fast as he could for nearly half an hour and he had almost reached the end of his trip. He was hot, though, and tired. Coming to a pleasant, shady

place, he stopped to cool off and rest. He looked at the watch. It was nearly seven o'clock!

The old house was not far off. He could see it clearly from where he stood; but he saw no Chatterlings playing outside—nor Momus, either.

That surprised him; he walked toward the house . . . but he went very carefully. About half way, he noticed that the door was closed. And the shutters were all closed, too. He hadn't gone very much farther when he saw, coming from behind the house, a troop of Red Chatterlings! And they tugged at the shutters, trying to open them. But the shutters held tight. They tried to push open the door—but that held, too. So they shook their fists at the house, and shouted. But Tip o'Tongue couldn't hear what it was that they shouted.

There was one window high up. It didn't have shutters. The Red Chatterlings tried to reach that window, but it was too high.

Prince Tip o'Tongue was sorry he had stayed at the palace all night. He felt that he should have been with his friends. They were in danger. And the number of the Red Chatterlings was steadily increasing. More and more of them came out of the woods, all armed with sardine forks—and all shouting unpleasantly—and shaking their fists!

Tip o'Tongue thought of turning around and going back to the palace for help. But that would take time, and time was growing precious. So he stayed where he was—wondering how he could get into the house. He crept closer, keeping himself well hidden in the underbrush.

Two more Red Chatterlings came out of the woods, and his heart sank when he saw that they carried a ladder —one long enough to reach to the unshuttered window.

There they placed it, and the Chatterlings' leader started to climb.

As he reached the window from the *outside*—Momus reached it from the *inside*. And when Momus dashed a snarling head out of that window the Red Chatterling dropped his sardine fork and let go. Of course he fell off, and he hit the ground hard!

Then Momus pushed the end of the ladder with his paws and it fell on top of the Red Chatterling, who started to cry as loud as he could cry! The tears were just streaming out of his eyes as he got up to limp away.

Momus stayed there laughing and none of the Red Chatterlings dared to put the ladder up again. Then Momus stopped laughing and sniffed. The fur wrinkled over his eyes, he sniffed again and looked at the bush behind which Tip o'Tongue was hiding. Momus must have known who was there because he gave a bark that seemed to say,

"Here I come," and with one bound leaped through the window and landed fifteen feet outside.

When the Red Chatterlings saw Momus jump they scampered back to the woods as fast as they could scamper — but Momus didn't follow. He ran straight to Tip o'Tongue wagging his tail as hard as he could wag it.

Then Tip o'Tongue, with Momus beside him, made a dash for the door. It swung open as they reached it and they both plunged in to be welcomed by Toby and the others.

After the door had been locked, Toby told Tip o'Tongue of all that had taken place during his absence.

"Yesterday afternoon," Toby said, "it was quiet and peaceful. We didn't see a sign of the Red Chatterlings. After supper Momus returned with my hat and your note. Then we went to bed.

"Momus woke us up early in the morning, barking and growling. We brought him in, but he kept on growling and wanted to go out again; we didn't let him and we didn't go out, either. We kept the door and the shutters locked tight, and I watched from the window upstairs. For some time nothing happened, then a number of things happened, one after the other.

"Red Chatterlings started to pop out from the woods; they circled round the house, shouting and calling names. And they lit fire crackers in front of the door.

"These BURST

with loud explosions. But the Red Chatterlings said that they BROKE, CRACKED and SPLIT! I heard them."

"Of course they BURST!" Tip o'Tongue exclaimed. "Things always burst, when the force comes from inside. Everybody knows that!"

"The Red Chatterlings didn't," said Toby. "I could clearly hear them talking after the explosions. Then two of them disappeared in the woods. They returned an hour later with a ladder."

"I saw them," said the Prince, "from where I was hiding. When I got here I knew there was something wrong. Everything was shut so tight. So I hid behind a bush—and watched. Then I saw the Red Chatterlings. I wanted to get to you, but I didn't know how to do it. If there had been any ribbons on my hat, I should have walked straight to the door, and the Red Chatterlings would not have dared to stop me. But there wasn't a single band around my hat . . . so I had to wait for Momus to bring me in."

"They are afraid of Momus," said Aeekins. "I suppose they don't like to be laughed at by a dog. I wouldn't."

"He remembers how they treated him when he was a puppy," said Toby, "they think he wants to get even."

"Or maybe," said Tip o'Tongue, "they know he is still angry . . . on account of his mother."

Beekins changed the subject by asking Tip o'Tongue

if he knew of any way to get them all home. Tip o'Tongue said he didn't—but he would think about it.

So Tip o'Tongue walked up and down, thinking and thinking and thinking. First he had his hands behind him, and then he put them in his pockets. He felt something soft and silky in one of them and drew it out with a flourish.

It was the King's purple silk handkerchief!

"Why, that's the King's purple silk handkerchief!" cried Toby.

"I found it in the palace garden," said Tip o'Tongue, "and forgot to give it back to the King."

"What are you going to do with it now?" Beekins asked.

"I'm going to roll it up and give it to Momus to carry back with a letter telling the King about the Red Chatterlings. He will do something right away. He said he would. We'll only have to wait—and not very long."

Tip o'Tongue wrote the letter at once. This is what he wrote;

"To His Royal Highness, the King—Greetings:

We are all well, but not so happy as we might be, being besieged in the old house by the Red Chatterlings. They are armed with sardine forks, and they seem *most* unfriendly.

Please do something about it.

Tip o'Tongue."

Tip o'Tongue rolled the letter up inside the handkerchief. Tightly. And he tied it with a string. He let Momus sniff it, and pointing to the window, he said:

"Momus, go straight to the King!"

Momus only stopped long enough to take the roll in his mouth—then he was through the open window like a flash, and his legs moved so fast that they couldn't be seen as he dashed for the town. And he didn't stop running, not once, until he reached the King.

The King was very glad to get his handkerchief back. It was his favorite handkerchief and he couldn't remember where he had left it. He took it from Momus,

untied the string and found the letter inside; but he ordered dog biscuits and milk brought in for Momus before reading the message.

After reading it, he tapped on the back of his throne with his sceptre; a man in waiting appeared and the king told him to bring writing materials.

As soon as they came, the King wrote a letter to Tip o'Tongue. He also wrote a Proclamation and put both of them in a large envelope. Next, he took three colored bands from his pocket—the three that he had taken from Tip o'Tongue's hat. After Momus sniffed them, they went into the envelope with the letter and the Proclamation.

"Take them to Tip o'Tongue, Momus," the King commanded—and Momus did.

Tip o'Tongue saw him coming and he called out to Toby to open the door. Momus bounded through and went straight to Tip o'Tongue.

RESTIVE

When the envelope was opened, and the colored bands fell out, Tip o'Tongue was so excited that he could scarcely read the letter. Indeed, he put the bands back on his hat before he even tried to read it. And when the other Chatterlings saw them, they danced around him joyously.

The Prince read the letter out loud.

"Dear Tip o'Tongue:

After the bands are on your hat, go outside and tack the enclosed Proclamation on a tree where the Red Chatterlings can see it. They won't bother you if the bands are on your hat.

His Royal Highness,
The King."

After reading the letter, Prince Tip o'Tongue read the Proclamation:

"To whom it may concern:

The King commands the Red Chatterlings to disperse at once, and to return to their homes.

If they don't, they will not be allowed to sell any more sardines within the city walls. Then they will get no money to buy things for themselves. They will starve, which will be a good thing for the Kingdom of Chatterland.

His Royal Highness,
The King."

The Proclamation was written on parchment in the

King's own hand. It was sealed with the Royal Seal which made it legal and binding.

The Prince asked Toby how the bands looked. Toby said they looked fine, so Tip o'Tongue got a hammer and tacks. Then he stepped outside.

As soon as he opened the door, the Red Chatterlings came from the trees where they were hiding and they started to run toward Tip o'Tongue. They waved their sardine forks in a most threatening way, but that didn't stop the Prince.

He walked straight on, and when the Red Chatterlings saw that, *they* stopped. When they noticed the three colored bands around his hat, they tried to hide their sardine forks.

But Prince Tip o'Tongue didn't pay any attention to them. He walked straight to a great big tree where he tacked up the Proclamation. After that he turned and walked slowly back.

Indoors, he went upstairs to join Toby. They saw the Red Chatterlings gather round the Proclamation and read it carefully. It seemed to startle and worry them. After reading it, they spoke to each other in low voices, then turned around and went off into the woods.

When Tip o'Tongue and Toby saw them go away, they went downstairs to tell the others. The door, the windows and the shutters were all thrown open. They ran upstairs

SCUFFLE

and down, and they danced all around, while Momus beat time with his tail.

But Tip o'Tongue happened to think of the time. He stopped dancing to look at the watch.

"It's after eight o'clock!" he exclaimed, "and I haven't got the right words yet!"

"Don't worry about that," Toby said, "we thought of them yesterday, while you were away."

"What are they?" Tip o'Tongue asked.

"ACCIDENT and MISHAP," Toby answered.

"They do seem alike," Prince Tip o'Tongue said, "and yet, they don't seem *quite* alike. If I take them to the King and they are wrong, I won't have much time to think of any others."

WRESTLE

"Let *me* take them to the King for you," Aeekins suggested.

"That would be fine," said Tip o'Tongue, "for it would give me almost an hour and a half to find better

ones—if there are any."

He wrote the two words on a piece of paper and gave it to Aeekins who put it in his pocket, at the same time asking:

"What time is it now?"

When told that it was nearly half past eight he left at once. He went to the town as quickly as he could travel, and he reached the palace as the clock struck nine. It had taken half an hour to make the trip.

As the palace attendants knew all of Tip o'Tongue's friends, Aeekins was admitted at once. He gave the two

words to the King, but the King shook his head sadly on reading them.

"No," he said, "these will not do. A MISHAP is something worse than an ACCIDENT—just as a calamity is worse than a mishap. No," he repeated, "these will not do. But why didn't Tip o'Tongue bring them, himself?"

"He was afraid they were not exactly alike, and he wished to waste no time on a useless trip."

"He was wise," the King said. "You had better wait for him here."

Aeekins sat down on the steps of the throne. About fifteen minutes later he heard footsteps outside, and a moment after Beekins entered with a piece of paper in his hand. He gave it to the King who read:

"SPURN and REJECT. No. One only spurns a thing for which one has contempt. One could respect a thing and still reject it. No, these words will not do . . . but why didn't the Prince bring them, himself?"

"He thought there was a slight difference between them," Beekins answered, "though he didn't know quite what it was. He decided to wait awhile, in case he could think of two more."

"He was wise. But he won't have long to wait. Sit down beside Aeekins until he comes."

Ceekins was the next to arrive, and he, too, had a paper in his hand.

"RESTIVE and RESTLESS," the King said, reading them. "They are more alike in sound than they are in meaning. Restive means obstinate, while restless means something quite different from that—I wonder at Tip o'Tongue sending them!"

"I wanted him to," Beekins said, in a rather worried voice, "he thought they were wrong."

"I'm glad to hear that," said the King. "It was kind to try to help him, though, so wait for him, here, on the steps of the throne. It's almost time for him to come."

It was Deekins who brought in SCUFFLE and WRESTLE. But the King said that wrestling was done at arm's length, but when people scuffled they grappled each other bodily.

He had scarcely finished explaining that difference when Eekins arrived with the words BUY and BARTER. They were rejected, too, because, as the King said:

"When people buy things they pay for them with money. When they barter they trade one thing for another. I am afraid that Tip o'Tongue is going to fail. He has only twenty minutes left."

When they heard him say that, the Chatterlings grew very sad, indeed; the King had been able to find some dif-

TO ACQUIESCE

ference between the words in every pair brought. The task seemed hopeless—and the time was short.

But somehow or other they cheered up when Toby came bursting into the throne room. There was a smile on his face and a paper in his hand. He gave it to the King.

"ACQUIESCE — AGREE. I cannot *agree* with the Prince that these words are exactly alike in meaning. If I accepted them I would merely acquiesce. But where is the Prince himself? It is almost ten o'clock and he has only until two minutes after."

"I don't know where he is," said Toby. "About half past nine I left. Tip o'Tongue wouldn't come then because he didn't think those words would do. He wanted to have one more chance."

It *had* been almost half past nine when Toby left, for

Tip o'Tongue had glanced at the watch a moment later. The hands pointed to twenty-seven minutes after nine! It would take him at least half an hour to reach the King, and that left precisely five more minutes to find the words!

The end was approaching—and he knew it. He tried his best to keep from thinking of what the end would be . . . but he could not do it.

Then . . . two words popped into his mind!

Was there yet time to get them to the King? He looked at the watch to see . . .

The hands were still pointing to twenty-seven minutes after nine. He hadn't wound it since the King had given it to him the day before . . . and it had stopped!

Poor Tip o'Tongue! He didn't know what to do, and he almost forgot what the words were that he had last thought of. When at last he did remember them again,

he wrote them down upon a piece of paper. Sticking it in his pocket he dashed for the palace.

From an upstairs window, in her house, Angelina could see the palace gates plainly. She had watched from that window all morning long. She had seen Tip o'Tongue leave the palace and she knew by his expression that he had not performed his task. Later she saw the Chatterlings as they entered the gates, one after the other. By the time Eekins entered, her patience gave out. She couldn't wait for Tip o'Tongue a single moment longer. So she went to the goat shed and harnessed the goats.

She turned their heads toward the old house at the edge of the woods. Once outside the town she flapped the reins and clucked her tongue to increase their speed. They were going along in a cloud of dust when they passed Toby; but Angelina did not stop. The town clock had struck half past nine . . . there wasn't a moment to lose, and Angelina knew it.

Far down the road there was another cloud of dust—and it was moving toward Angelina almost as fast as she was moving toward it. She soon saw that someone running was raising that dust, and a little later she recognized Tip o'Tongue's checkered coat. It was not moving toward her so quickly now—and the dust was subsiding.

In a minute or two they met; but Tip o'Tongue was

exhausted. He had scarcely enough strength left to step into the cart. He dropped to the seat beside Angelina and gasped:

"Oh, Angelina, please take me to the palace!"

He was almost sobbing as he said it, but Angelina understood. She turned the cart around and snapped the whip over the goats' heads. They were off like a shot and flying down the road, their tails sticking out straight behind them. The wheels whirred and the wind blew and the trees just flew by.

They entered the town at precisely ten o'clock—they counted the strokes as they struck. One minute later they were dashing through the palace gate. Tip o'Tongue jumped from the cart and Angelina jumped, too.

Hand in hand they ran for the throne room to find the King standing in the centre of the floor, a watch in his right hand and the purple silk handkerchief in his left.

"One second to spare!" cried the King and he dropped the watch to the floor as he reached out to take the paper that Tip o'Tongue extended.

The King read Tip o'Tongue's last two words, then he took him by the hand and led him to the throne. He gave his sceptre to Tip o'Tongue and he placed his own crown upon Tip o'Tongue's head.

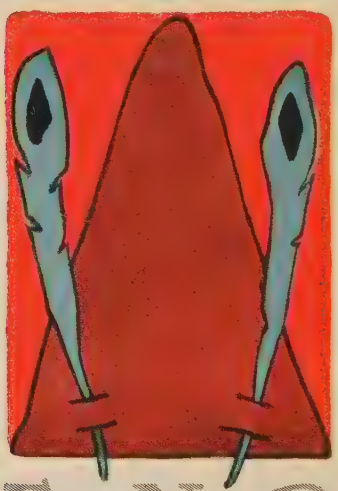
Only a moment before the Chatterlings had been crying

and weeping—now they were smiling and laughing. The King waved his purple silk handkerchief and Momus wagged his tail.

For Momus had followed along right after the cart; but he couldn't be seen on account of the dust.

And the winning words conclude the tale . . . .

FINIS



THE END

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